

SHOW REPORTS & PHOTOS

Rufer rules at the inaugural \$100,000 CSI2* Grand Prix.

After two times coming in second, Karrie Rufer finally made it to the top of the podium Sunday winning the \$100,000 CSI2* 1.45m Grand Prix with Morning Star Sporthorses' Mai Tai 2 at the Sonoma International CSI2*, part of the Split Rock Jumping Tour.

Created by show jumper Derek Braun in 2015, the Split Rock Jumping Tour set out to “revolutionize the sport of show jumping in the United States.” Providing an “unparalleled experience” for competitors, sponsors and spectators is the tour’s mission and Braun was happy to add a West Coast stop with this year’s addition of a of the Sonoma International CSI2*, Sept. 5-9, at the Sonoma Horse Park (California Riding Magazine, Nov. 2017).

“It’s great to be out here in Sonoma. The facility and the layout work perfectly for my type of event,” said SRJT founder Derek. “The main thing I’m trying to create through this is that riders of all levels, whether it be top riders or lower level riders, that when they hear Split Rock is running the show they know exactly what they’re going to get. They know that all the things that matter are going to be taken care of.”



Written by CRM

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During the show's Sunday finale, six of the 48 starters advanced to the jump off round in the 1.45m Grand Prix, including Rufer and Shawn Casady, who had already faced off once before this week. But, Rufer and the quick-footed Westphalian gelding were ultimately the fastest, stopping the clock at 44.895 seconds after two clear rounds.

"It was a lot of déjà vu. The nice thing was that when I was second to Shawn [Casady] the other day I was on my other horse, and I know [Mai Tai 2] is so much faster," Rufer said. "He's just naturally speedy across the ground. He's bold but he's careful, so I knew there were things I could do on that horse today that I couldn't do on the other one.

"It comes down to a little bit of luck, a good horse and your day," she continued. "It's my first CSI2* win and with a horse that I brought up since he was a 6-year-old. Every time I ask him for more he just gives me more."

Lindsay Archer set the pace for the class as the first clear round of the division with Rhys Farm LLC's Jarpur, and she kept that momentum going into the jump-off earning second place with a time of 46.265.

Casady graciously settled for both third and fourth place, but not before soaking Rufer with the celebratory champagne. Highpoint Farm LLC's Durango VDL went through the timers in 46.599 seconds for third, and his stablemate Cicomein VDL, who is owned by HKC Collection LLC, had a four-fault jump off round in 46.682 seconds for fourth.



Saturday's Young Stars

The future of the sport was showcased Saturday with young horses dominating the competition. The 8-year-old stallion Menelik, ridden by Karl Cook, had the stand out performance of the day to win the \$5,000 Animo 1.40m Youngster Bowl, a class designed for 7- and 8-year-old horses.

Signe Ostby's Hanoverian, who is by Monte Bellini and out of Statella P, produced two picture perfect rounds with a jump off time of 46.668 to secure a podium finish.

"The horses are all young, so you want to go as fast as is reasonable for them," Cook said of his strategy for the class. "It's kind of a hard line to walk-you want to push them, but not too far. My goal was to push as hard as he felt he could handle."

"He's a really good guy to have around. He's very professional. He doesn't get psyched up before he goes in. He knows the job," Cook added.

Mandy Porter and Wild Turkey Farm LLC's WT Leapfrog, a 7-year-old Holsteiner stallion by Lio Calyon and out of Grandessa, took second after two clear rounds and a jump off time of 47.995. Stopping the clock at 49.293 seconds for third place was Shawn Casady and HKC Collection LLC's Ariana, a 7-year-old KWPN mare by Cantos and out of Chup A Chup.

Descanso Farm's Rumpleteazer DF continued her dominance of the 5-year-old classes, winning the \$1,000 Animo 5-Year-Old Final Saturday with Will Simpson in the tack. Two foot perfect rounds and a jump-off time of 29.611 secured the top spot for the Warmblood mare by Flexible.

Riding for Altaire Ventures, Hallie Bittenwieser piloted Ezmeralda EH Z, a Zangersheide mare by Emerald Van't Ruytershof, to a top finish in the \$1,000 Animo 6-Year-Old Final after producing two clear rounds and a jump off time of 35.671 seconds.

Juniors & Amateurs

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Sabine Cooper earned a win in the \$7,500 1.30m Medium Junior/Amateur Final with her Juweel van Maarle. She was the only rider to take the risky inside turn to fence three of the jump off, and it made the difference in her winning 38.123 second time.

In a nail-biting jump off finale, Sydnie Young and Madison Breen's Lambert Louis clinched a win in the \$7,500 1.20m Low Junior/Amateur Final with a time of 31.943 seconds.



Lauren Little and her Ultra d'Eclipse took their second win of the weekend in the Free x Rein 1.0m Low Child/Adult Speed class. The pair stopped the clock at 57.66 seconds after a beautiful clear round.

Emma Catherine Reichow her Cubiki were untouchable in the \$1,000 1.40m Junior/Amateur Speed class. They were quickest across the ground in 68.829 seconds with a clear round.

Olivia Williams and her Cansas were congratulated with an eruption of applause after their win of the \$500 1.10m Child/Adult Speed class. Their efficient clear round gave them a time of 56.011 seconds, which was the best of the group.

Professional Bert Mutch was a big winner earlier in the week and summed up competitors' sentiments about the show. "I've dreamt of doing Split Rock. It's such a nice event with an international look to it. It's exciting to have this kind of competition in Northern California to raise the bar and really help our sport, so I came here very well prepared."

October 2018 - Split Rock Sonoma International

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The 2018 Split Rock Jumping Tour schedule includes five FEI shows in four outstanding venues. Earlier this year, SRJT hosted The Kentucky Invitational CSI3*, a new event held concurrently with the Land Rover Kentucky Three-Day Event at the Kentucky Horse Park. It was followed by The Lexington International CSI2* at Split Rock Farm in Lexington, Kentucky. In addition to the Sonoma International CSI2*, SRJT was set to host The Columbus International CSI2*, September 26-30, and The Longines FEI World Cup Jumping Columbus CSI3*-W, October 3-7, both at the Brave Horse Show Park in Columbus, Ohio.

Edited press release. For more information, visit www.SplitRockJumpingTour.com.